VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

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April 1,2009

The Honorable Lamar Smith
United States House of Representatives
2409 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Smith:

The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) is requesting funding for The Next Generation Manufacturing Processes and Systems initiative. The requested amount is $2,000,000 for FY 2010, in order to establish a research and education program for enhancing U.S. competitiveness in flexible rapid response manufacturing. Funding for this research will increase the manpower, manufacturing technology, and knowledge available to support quick response, high-technology precision manufacturing and will provide an important competitive advantage for nation. The State of Texas is the 2nd highest provider of manufacturing jobs in the country. Many key defense industries are located in Texas and UT Austin has strong ties to defense laboratories, defense manufacturing, and critical commercial manufacturing entities. Most defense needs, and many critical commercial needs, are for precision manufactured parts in small lots, where both flexibility and rapid response from suppliers is critical. Next Generation Manufacturing Processes and Systems can insulate U.S. manufacturers from the effects of overseas low-wage competition by providing a very rapid response to U.S. customer needs. The current infrastructure and faculty resources represented at UT Austin are ideally suited to meet the educational and research goals of the Next Generation Manufacturing Processes and Systems initiative.

The University of Texas at Austin has been a leader in developing and implementing processes that are well-suited to flexible, rapid response manufacturing. The UT Austin's Advanced Manufacturing Center (AMC) is a Cockrell Engineering School-wide research/education unit with over 40 faculty affiliates drawn from across the campus. Funding for this request will enable further research progress in small-lot, rapid manufacturing and additionally will produce a skilled group of engineers to ensure U.S. competitiveness in tomorrow's manufacturing industry.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Juan M. Sanchez
Vice President for Research

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